



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Kathleen Cahill
Community Development
Senior Planner

Members

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair
Girard Plante, Co-Chair
Jane Brown
Lucie Chansky
Jini Fairley
Jeff Hutter
Rosemary Larking
Barbara Lischinsky
Heather Platt
Jason Rosenberg

1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459
T 617/796-1120
F 617/796-1142

www.newtonma.gov

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

A G E N D A *

Date: April 11, 2011

Time: 6: 30 p.m.

Place: Room 209

PLEASE NOTE ROOM CHANGE

1. **Minutes:** Consideration of the approval of the minutes from the March 14, 2011 meeting of the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities {6:30}
2. **Guest Speaker:** Jeff Duggan, Massachusetts Office on Disability {6:35}
3. **Discussion:** Fair Housing Month Event {7:00}
4. **Discussion:** HP parking in West Newton and Waban Village and curb cuts/crosswalks at the intersection of Braeland Street and Cypress Street {7:15}
5. **Report:** Projects funded with CDBG Access funds {7:45}
 - Detectable warnings – Intersection of Sargent and Centre
6. **Report:** Members and public report on any issues of potential non-compliance in the City which are then forwarded to the Inspectional Services Department {8:00}
 - Updates: AMC Theatres - Chestnut Hill; New England Mobile Book Fair; Newton District Court; Panera; B Street
7. **Other Business {8:15}**

Next Meetings: May 9, June 13, July 11

*Supplementary materials are available for public review in the Planning Department in the Basement of City Hall by the Tuesday before the meeting. For more information **contact Kathleen Cahill 617.796.1125.**

The location of this meeting is handicap accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons requiring assistance. If you have a special accommodation need, contact the Newton ADA Coordinator Kathleen Cahill at 617-796-1125 or kcahill@newtonma.gov or via TDD/TTY at (617) 796-1089 at least two days in advance of the meeting.



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2011

Setti D. Warren
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Candace Havens
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Planning & Development

Kathleen Cahill
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Senior Planner

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Members Present:

Jane Brown
Rob Caruso, Co-Chair
Lucie Chansky
Rosemary Larking
Heather Platt
Girard Plante, Co-Chair

Staff Present:

Kathleen Cahill, Community Development Senior Planner

Public:

Bob Engler
Sandra Lingley
Dina Rosenbaum

Regrets:

Jeff Hutter
Jini Fairley
Jason Rosenberg

R. Caruso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

- 1. Minutes:** Consideration of the approval of the minutes from the January 10, and February 14, meeting of the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

J. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes. L. Chansky seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the January 10, and February 14, meeting minutes.

- 2. Guest Speaker:** Dina Rosenbaum, Carroll Center for the Blind

Dina Rosenbaum, from the Carroll Center for the Blind attended the meeting to speak to Committee members about the services and programs that the Carroll

Center offers the community. D. Rosenbaum indicated that the Carroll Center's residential rehabilitation facility draws students from all over the world. Approximately three percent of the student population enrolled in the residential rehabilitation program is from Massachusetts while the rest of the Carroll Center's students come world-wide. The Center is the only residential rehabilitation program in the Northeast and it is one of six in the United States. Many students seek the Carroll Center's services after experiencing a vision loss in order to learn skills that they will need on a daily basis. The Center offers an internship program and a youth transition program which is held during the summer. Recently, Newton CDBG funds were awarded to the Carroll Center to assist elders with severe vision loss, which has been recognized as a growing population in need of assistance, as most programs for the blind focus on the work-age population.

Members wondered how students paid for the Carroll Center services. D. Rosenbaum responded that vision rehabilitation is not covered by Medicaid, Medicare, or insurance. However, there is state funded financial support through the Massachusetts Association for the Blind and only about 5 percent of students pay for services out-of-pocket. The cost of mobility orientation services is between \$75-\$95/hour. Assistive devices are available for sale, by phone or at the Carroll Center. The Center has experienced cuts both at the state and federal level. Fundraising levels and donations have also decreased in recent years.

3. Guest Speaker: SEB LLC, Developer of 112-116 Dedham Street

Bob Engler of SEB LLC spoke with the Committee about the proposed housing project at 112-116 Dedham Street. The project, as proposed, includes 16 housing units, 4 of which will be deed restricted for households earning less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income. A total of three of the units will be Group 2 accessible units, according to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board regulations. There are 14 2-bedroom units and 2 3-bedroom units (one market rate and one affordable). Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds have been requested.

Although the grounds of the development are level and accessible, there is a steep driveway with a slope of approximately 9 percent, from Dedham Street up to the development. The Committee members wondered if there could be pedestrian access from Ledgewood Street, at the back of the site, which would provide an accessible way to get into the surrounding neighborhood. This is a possibility, but currently there is a stone wall that would need to be taken down. Negotiations with the neighborhood would also need to take place, as Ledgewood Street is considered a private road.

B. Engler mentioned the difficulty that SEB LLC had in attracting a buyer that needed the accessible unit at their 192 Lexington Street project, despite the extensive and targeted marketing that was undertaken. B. Engler hopes the Committee will reach out through their members' networks when the Dedham Street units are put on the market, should the project be approved. The buyers of the affordable units, like 192 Lexington, will be selected through a lottery.

The Committee wondered if SEB LLC had hired an access consultant. The architect that was hired to design the development is well versed in accessibility requirements. B. Engler wondered if there were any reoccurring accessibility issues that the Committee observed in housing developments. Members mentioned problems with thresholds, particularly thresholds onto outdoor patios, as well as thermometers that did not incorporate Braille.

The Committee discussed some of the site's accessibility issues. One member felt that the lack of accessibility from the street was a problem, particularly since public funds are being requested by the developer. Other members felt that the slope constituted a customary "buyer beware" situation which exists with any homebuying opportunity. While the topography may be a problem for a portion of the population with disabilities there are other people with disabilities that could live in the development without being affected by the lack of pedestrian street access. One member believed that the project should be supported based on the inclusion of accessible, affordable units, particularly considering the alternative by-right development that could be built on the site if the project was not approved.

H. Platt made a motion to recommend approval of the 112-116 Dedham Street project to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). J. Brown seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-1-1 to recommend approval of the project to the CPC.

4. **Report:** Projects funded with CDBG Access funds

K. Cahill reported on CDBG access projects. B. Lischinsky suggested that the intersection of Walnut Street and Beacon Street be added to the list of intersection for APS. A preliminary discussion was held on the \$6,000 in retro-fitting curb cut funds that are available for re-allocation. The Committee tabled this discussion to a later meeting.

5. **Discussion:** DeafBlind Community Access Network proposed elimination

The Committee discussed writing a letter to the governor voicing opposition to the proposed elimination of the DeafBlind Community Access Network program. Many members felt that there were other reductions and cuts that should be addressed by the Committee, specifically, the reductions in dental coverage for people with disabilities and cuts to the Department of Mental Health. L. Chansky made a motion that the Committee draft and send a letter opposing the cuts to the DeafBlind Community Access Network program, reductions in dental coverage for people with disabilities and cuts to the Department of Mental Health. J. Brown seconded the motion and the Committee voted 6-0-0 to send the letter.

6. **Discussion:** HP parking in West Newton and Waban Village and curb cuts/crosswalks at the intersection of Braeland Street and Cypress Street

Item held for discussion due to lack of a quorum.

7. **Report:** Members and public report on any issues of non-compliance in the City which are then forwarded to the Inspectional Services Department

K. Cahill provided the Committee with an update on the New England Mobile Book Fair. The Inspectional Service Department is working with the Fire Department to address a series of compliance issues at this business. Additional information will follow in the coming weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
CDBG Access Projects Report
April 11, 2011

Accessible Pedestrian Signals (Project CD10-03D. Expended, \$7,818; Budget balance: \$17,995; CD10-03D). Centre St. and Centre Ave. is a priority intersection; however it is on-hold pending a final decision by the Newton Corner Advisory Committee. Installation of APS improvements at Washington St. and Commonwealth Ave. will be completed this spring. Installation of APS at Washington Street by Newton-Wellesley Hospital will begin next spring after curb cut/crosswalk work is completed.

Charlesbank Playground (Project CD0903C. Expended, \$22,872; Budget balance: \$7,125). Phase I includes new play equipment and swings on top of rubberized safety surfacing, a new accessible entrance ramp, accessible benches and picnic tables, and planting of new trees and shrubs. The project is 80% complete – all walkways, new sidewalks and the ramp have been installed as well as the play equipment and the rubberized safety surfacing. Handrails for the ramp still need to be installed and the area needs to be seeded this spring.

Curb Cuts (Project CD1003C, Expended: \$33,503 Budget balance: \$110,978; CD1103G, Budget Balance \$78,000). Work at Lowell @ Washington is scheduled for July 2011. Design for Walnut @ Newtonville and @ Austin Street seems to be stalled; Committee would like to consider curb cut construction @ Washington and Commonwealth but waiting on federal budget to be finalized.

Retrofitting Curb Cuts (Project CD0903E, Budget balance, \$6,000). A total of 7 locations (Homer Street, Beacon St. @ Dalton, Centre Green @ Langley, 1188 Centre Green, 82 Lincoln Street, 100 Walnut Street, 28 Commonwealth St) (19 curb cuts) were fitted with tactile warnings. Project 100% complete. No labor was billed; Committee needs to discuss another use of funds.

Nahanton Accessible Pathway and Handicap Parking Space (CDR09-03, Expended: 15,051; Budget balance: \$7,783)

Project includes retrofitting park for handicap accessibility through the construction of an accessible pathway and the addition of a van accessible parking space. Construction began mid-September. Accessible pathway complete, HP space installed (no striping), work on water mitigation will begin in May.

Newton Community Service Center – Auditorium Ramp (CD11-03E, Budget balance: 5,000). Construction of an accessible ramp in the auditorium of the organization's Waltham Street location. NCSC finalizing project timeline.

Historic Newton/The Jackson Homestead – Archives Preservation and Access (CD1103F, Budget balance \$40,000). Construction of an accessible ramp into the entrance of the Jackson Homestead. Design work being finalized.



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Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Candace Havens
Director

DATE: April 1, 2011

TO: Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

FROM: Kathleen Cahill, Community Development Senior Planner

RE: Recommendation to transfer \$2,300 in funds from the FY09 Retrofitting Curb Cuts project to FY10 APS for the installation of APS at Washington Street nearby the Newton Wellesley Hospital

In November the Committee discussed using FY10 APS funds to install APS at the intersection of Washington Street and the Newton-Wellesley Hospital. Two quotes were sought from Republic ITS, the City's APS contractor.

The first quote included the installation of 6 APS, one at each corner. Republic ITS estimated this work to cost \$11,100. The second quote included the installation of 4 APS and the removal of 2 APS, at the northwestern and northeastern corners of the intersection. Consideration was given to removing these 2 APS because the crossing was determined to be under-used by the City Traffic Engineer. The removal of these signals would also conserve APS maintenance costs. Republic ITS estimated this work to cost \$8,800. In order to ensure that the crossings at this intersection would be safe for everyone the City would also need to remove the curb cuts where the APS signals were being taken out. Removing these curb cuts would prevent anyone with a visual impairment from trying to cross at this part of the intersection. The preliminary cost of removing the curb cuts was \$3,000.

Original Estimates:

Option #1: 6 APS	\$11,100.00
Option #2: 4 APS;	
2 APS Removal	\$8,800.00
Removing (2) curb cuts	<u>\$3,000.00</u>
Total	\$11,800.00

The consensus of the Committee in November was to move forward with option #2.

This week the Department of Public Works submitted the finalized cost of removing the 2 curb cuts at this intersection, which was \$8,000 instead of \$3,000. This additional amount increases the cost of Option #2 from \$11,800 to \$16,800.

March Estimates:

Option #1: 6 APS	\$11,100.00
Option #2: 4 APS;	
2 APS Removal	\$8,800.00
Removing (2) curb cuts	<u>\$8,000.00</u>
Total	\$16,800.00

Staff recommends that the Committee consider moving forward with Option #1 instead of Option #2. This would require an additional \$2,300 in CDBG Access funds. These additional funds could be transferred from the FY09 Retrofitting Curb Cut project, which came in under budget.